WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for allowing participants of a product community to interact with product definition data pertinent to at least a portion of a lifecycle of the product, the system comprising:

a community server accessible via a network by the participants of the product community and which uses the product definition data;

plural application suites executed by the community server for permitting interaction with the product definition data by corresponding plural differing types of participants.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the interaction includes plural ones of the following:

(1) viewing the product definition data;

(2) revising the product definition data;

(3) routing the product definition data;

(4) notifying other participants of modification of the product definition data.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the plural differing types of participants include a component supplier for the product; a designer for the product; a customer for the product; a marketer for the product.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein the lifecycle includes product design, product production, product delivery/distribution, product marketing and sales, and product support.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein the product definition data includes data for providing a three dimensional display of at least a portion of the product.

6. The system of claim 1, wherein the plural application suites include at least one of the following:

(1) a supplier participation suite through which a component supplier for the product interacts with the product design data;

(2) a customer participation suite through which a customer of the product interacts with the product design data;

7   (3)   an engineering participation suite through which a designer of the product

8   interacts with the product definition data.

1   7. The system of claim 1, wherein the plural application suites include a supplier

2 participation suite through which a component supplier for the product performs at least

3 one of the following:

4   responds to a request for a quote for a component of the product;

5   tracks a job to determine progress/stage of an implementation or change process.

1   8. The system of claim 1, wherein the plural application suites include a

2 customer participation suite through which a customer supplier for the product performs

3 at least one of the following:

4   views a three dimensional image of the product;

5   provides feedback comment regarding the product.

1   9. A network-based product development community system comprising:

2   a network node for storing product definition data pertinent to at least a portion

3 of a lifecycle of the product;

4   a network node for each of plural participants of the product development

5 community through which the respective participants interact with the product

6 definition data;

7   a community server situated at a node of the network which, when a change

8 affecting the product definition data occurs as a result of interaction by a first

9 participant, notifies others of the plural participants of the change.

1   10. The system of claim 9, wherein the network is an enterprise network and the

2 nodes are nodes of the enterprise network.

1   11. The system of claim 9, wherein the network is the Internet and the nodes are

2 nodes of the Internet.